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St. Ansgarius Lutheran Church, Utica, Ill.

Fiftieth Anniversary, 1890-1940.

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50th Anniversary

1890-1940



St. Ansgarius Lutheran Church
Utica, Illinois

Saturday and Sunday, June 15 and 16, 1940



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Fiftieth Anniversary

1890-1940



ST. ANSGARIUS LUTHERAN CHURCH

How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts.—Psalm 84:1.

St. Ansgarius Lutheran Church
Utica, Illinois



PASTOR CONSTANTINE TRUED

*And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.—
Jeremiah 3:15.*

Christian Friends:

“A Jubilee shall that fiftieth year be unto you.”—Leviticus 25:11.

Thus God proclaimed to the Israelites a season of special thanksgiving, and thus also I wish to extend God's proclamation to our Utica Church. Fifty years testify to the abundant grace and mercy of our kind Father. God grant that our future labor will witness continued growth in consecration, support, and devotion. May His benediction be always upon us.

Sincerely,
CONSTANTINE TRUED

Dedication . . .

WE dedicate this book to the blessed memory of the pioneer fathers and mothers who established the work of our Lord and Saviour here; and to all those sainted souls who through the years have carried on this work by prayer, service and sacrifice.

The Word of God, how deeply sown
Within the hearts of those, who, led
By faith, foundation laid, whereon
We stand today, so firm and strong.

And here this day we celebrate
What fifty years ago they made
Through sacrifice and trust in Him,
A fitting place to worship God.





ST. ANSGARIUS LUTHERAN CONGREGATION

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.—Psalm 133:1.

History of St. Ansgarius Lutheran Church

ON November 25th, in the year 1890, mainly through the efforts of O. J. Malkevick, then a layman, later an ordained Minister, Reverend Nilsson of Morris, Illinois, presided at a meeting called with the intention of organizing a congregation of Scandinavian people of Utica, Illinois. This intention was carried to fulfillment with an enrolled male membership of fourteen. One of the fourteen was Charles Swanson, who served the congregation faithfully and well as deacon, Sunday School Superintendent and in other capacities until the summons to "come up higher" came on March 25th, 1938.

A committee was elected at this first meeting to investigate the cost of a church building and to find a room where immediate worship services could be held. Some members of that committee were Charles Anderson, father of John and Louis Anderson; John P. Swanson, father of Mrs. Louis Larson, Mrs. John Anderson, Andrew, Harmon and the late Charles Swanson; Anton Larson, father of Louis Larson, Mrs. Anton Stein, Mrs. Fred Johnson, Mrs. Willis Williams, and the late Mrs. Andrew Eastman.

On December 1st of the same year, another meeting was held to determine if the constitution of the Augustana Synod was to be adopted. It was at this time that the newly formed congregation decided upon the name of St. Ansgarius.

This name was of particular significance, for to the Scandinavian people, St. Ansgarius was the well-beloved disciple.*

On December 2nd, the following day, a meeting was again called to elect trustees. The following were elected: John Swan-

*St. Ansgarius, "The Apostle of the North," was born in Picardy, France, September 8th, 801. Left motherless before he was five years of age, he was placed in a cloister, where he received his schooling, and later became instructor. Following admonitions received by him in visions of his mother, the Apostle Peter, John the Baptist, and of God, he wanted to serve Him more devotedly. He became a missionary to Denmark.

The Swedish people at this time were hearing rumors about the Christian religion, and desiring to know more about it, petitioned the king about the year 830 to send for a missionary. St. Ansgarius, then in Denmark, heard of it, and anxious to spread the gospel, went at once to the Swedish people. So, St. Ansgarius was the first missionary to Sweden, and is credited with building the first church there.

After a life full of service to the God he loved, he died in Bremen, February 5th, 865, with the one regret, that he had not been found worthy of martyrdom.



ST. ANSGARIUS LUTHERAN SUNDAY SCHOOL

ESTHER M. PETERSON, *Superintendent*

Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.—Luke 18:16.



INTERIOR OF ST. ANSGARIUS LUTHERAN CHURCH

I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.—
Psalm 122:1.

son, Charles Anderson, Gust Johnson, Ben Sampson, and Charles Palmqvist.

At a meeting held December 28th, it was decided to hold two meetings monthly, one in Swedish and the other in Norwegian, with theological students from the Seminary at Rock Island serving. The male members pledged an average of fifty-five cents per month per member to care for all expenses.

In January, 1891, they voted to pay the student pastor \$3.50 per service. Reverend C. A. Sward served the congregation intermittently as student pastor from December, 1895, until April, 1903.

The building committee reported on March 25th, 1891, that the back room of the Baptist Church was available to members of St. Ansgarius congregation for their semi-monthly services at a fee of \$2.00 per month. This offer was accepted and this room became their temple until September, 1896.

The first congregational statistical report issued on December 21st, 1891, reads as follows:

| | |
|----------------------|---------|
| Pastor's Salary..... | \$70.00 |
| Church Rent..... | 24.00 |
| China Missions..... | 8.21 |

Notice that missionary work began with the organization of the congregation. It is interesting to note here also, that in the year 1921 one of the congregation's members, Miss Anna F. Olson became a missionary nurse to China, where she is still on active duty.

On September 12th, 1896, the Baptist Church having been destroyed by fire, an expression of sympathy and a vote of thanks was tendered them for the use of the room. During the next several years, services were held in a back room in the public school building.

The congregation was incorporated January 29th, 1900. The lots whereon the present sanctuary stands were purchased in February, 1900, from Gust Johnson. The church was built, and was dedicated on August 12th of that year. The first children baptized in the newly constructed temple were Ruth Swanson, Elmer Eastman and Glen Peterson.

Reverend Gustaf Erickson, then pastor of the Bethany Church, Wenona, served as vice pastor from August, 1897, until September, 1908. During the latter years, the deacons of the congregation had charge of some of the worship services.

In 1906, Josephine Palmqvist was elected organist for the congregation and she has since served in that capacity without interruption.

It was not until 1907 that the first effort toward securing a resident pastor was made. At the annual meeting of 1907, student

O. H. Arthur of the Augustana Seminary was called to serve the congregations of Utica and Granville, jointly, at a salary of \$900.00 per year and free parsonage. This call was not accepted. In March, 1908, a call was issued to Reverend Peter Pearson of Rankin, Illinois, but again the call was declined. A third call was extended, this time to Reverend F. O. Linder of Ogema, Wisconsin, who accepted and took up his duties on the new field in September, 1908, the first resident pastor for both the Utica and Granville congregations.

Pastor Linder continued to serve until 1911, handing in his



CHURCH CHOIR

UPPER ROW (left to right): Everett Johnson, Roland Kleinhans, Louis Larson, William Duff, Emery Carlson, Dale Dimmick, Otto Danz. MIDDLE ROW: Josephine Palmqvist, organist; Ann Johnson, Ruby Kleinhans, Josephine Culver, Ruth Larson, Helen Ellis. LOWER ROW: Anna Duff, Alma Danz, Genevieve Carlson, Reverend G. Everett Arden, Esther Peterson, Jessie Joy, Helen Eastman.

Serve the Lord with gladness; come before his presence with singing.—Psalm 100:2.

resignation in April of that year. Two months later, in June, Pastor S. N. Elvin of Quincy, Massachusetts, was called. This call was also accepted. Reverend Elvin served until March, 1916.

Reverend Geo. A. Johnson of Moscow, Idaho, was next called and accepting the call began his work here in the spring of 1917.

Reverend Johnson continued to serve this pastorate until September, 1928.

After Reverend Johnson had resigned and moved to Vinton, Iowa, the future for the Lutheran congregation at Utica did not seem too bright, for it was about this time that the depression began to make itself felt. Living costs were high and income was reduced. It was decided therefore, to try to get along, temporarily, without a resident pastor. Students from the Seminary were again called to serve the field.

It was during this period of vacancy that the use of the Swed-



THE BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION

UPPER ROW (left to right): Louis Larson, Newell Culver, Carl Swanson, Otto Danz. LOWER ROW: Burton Cooke, Andrew Swanson, Reverend G. Everett Arden, Chester Swanson.

Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.
—Acts 6:3.

ish language was entirely dropped and English exclusively adopted. It was also during this time that the congregation undertook a building program which included the construction of a chancel, sacristy, and new entrance to the basement.

Though the future perhaps seemed uncertain, there were many who prayed for brighter days, and envisioned the time when



ANNA F. OLSON

Missionary Nurse, Kiahsien, Honan, China

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.—Matthew 28:19.



REVEREND AND MRS. G. EVERETT ARDEN,
JANICE AND ELDON

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.—Matthew 28:20.

God would answer their prayers and bring a shepherd to this anxious flock again. Their hopes and prayers were not in vain, for the attention of Dr. Peter Peterson, the Conference president, had been called to this field. With his characteristic sympathy for the small, struggling congregations under his care, Dr. Peterson visited Utica during the fall of 1932. The result of that visit was that in March, 1933, a new combination of congregations was created, joining into one pastorate the Utica, Granville, and Putnam fields. A call to serve this triangular pastorate was extended to G. Everett Arden, a senior in the Seminary that year. This call was accepted, and in August, 1933, Reverend Arden presented his first sermon in Utica as pastor of the congregation.

With the coming of a resident pastor once more to their midst, a new spirit of interest and enthusiasm was soon manifested throughout the congregation which under the blessing of God has carried this church into a new day of activity and community influence. This new spirit is evident in the fact that during the period between 1933 and 1940 the communicant membership has been approximately doubled.

The latest addition to the furnishings of the sanctuary and for the enhancement of worship is the Wicks Pipe Organ which was installed in February and dedicated on February 25th, 1940.

The Sunday School was started February, 1891, with Charles Anderson as superintendent and forty enrolled members. In June, 1891, O. J. Malkevick became the superintendent and served for the following four and one-half years. It is worthy of comment that since Mr. Malkevick, the Sunday School has had only five different superintendents. This was due largely to the faithfulness, patience, and loving-kindness of Charles Swanson, a confirmand of the first class of 1891, who for twenty-five years gave of his time and efforts to develop the love of God in the hearts of the children. The church today in no small measure bears the imprint of his example and teaching.

There have been fifteen confirmation classes of children from the Sunday School, making a total of 120 confirmands, 109 of whom are living. The enrollment today totals sixty-two. These are divided as follows: nine cradle roll members, 35 members under confirmation age, nine adults and nine officers and teachers. Miss Esther M. Peterson is superintendent; O. W. Danz, assistant superintendent and teacher; Miss Josephine Palmqvist, organist and teacher; Mrs. Burton Cooke, cradle roll superintendent and teacher; Miss Louise Larson, secretary; Miss Genevieve Carlson, treasurer and teacher; and Mrs. O. W. Danz, Mrs. Charles Swanson, and Miss Ruth Larson, teachers.

The Luther League was organized May 15th, 1896, under the leadership of O. J. Malkevick. There were thirteen young people

at the first meeting, all of whom became charter members.

During the years which followed, the League has contributed to the spiritual life of the church, as well as in many other ways. Some of the contributions made are the pulpit, church bell, and lighting fixtures.

Meetings are held monthly in the homes of the members, and consist of a devotional period, a business session, and a social hour of good fellowship.

Present officers are: Mrs. Anna Duff, president; Dale Dimmick, vice president; Beverly Cooke, secretary; and Newell Culver, treasurer.

The first mention of a Ladies Aid Society is found in the yearly report of December 17th, 1893. A year later, the yearly report shows a contribution to the congregation by the Ladies Aid Society of \$21.00. Since that time, it has made itself felt all through the years with its financial and spiritual assistance. It was of great help in raising funds for the construction of the church building.

At present its oyster stew supper is an annual event looked forward to by every one in the vicinity. Monthly meetings are held in the homes of members for Christian fellowship and a social time. The present officers are Mrs. Josephine Culver, President; Mrs. Clara Johnson, Vice President; Mrs. Ann Johnson, Secretary; Mrs. Alma Danz, Treasurer; Mrs. Mary Jorgensen, in charge of Flower Fund.

It is unfortunate that the history of fifty years must needs be concluded with a note of sadness. On January 21st, 1940, Reverend Arden presented his resignation as pastor of the three congregations he had served for nearly seven years. During his service here, both he and Mrs. Arden had endeared themselves to the hearts of the entire congregation. It was, therefore, with saddened hearts that the congregation accepted his resignation, which became effective April 14th. Reverend Arden began his new work as pastor of the Augustana Lutheran Church of Hyde Park, Chicago, the week of April 15th. The prayer of the Utica Congregation is that God will continue to bless and use Reverend Arden in the furtherance of His Kingdom.

Knowing that it is God's will that work in this community should continue to bear fruit, a call was immediately issued to Reverend Constantine Trued, who was ordained on June 9th of this year. This call was accepted and Reverend Trued became the new shepherd, presenting his first sermon on April 28th. He will take up his residence here on July 1st.

Praise be to God who has dealt so bountifully with this congregation. May He continue to bless us as we labor together in His service, building on the solid foundation which is Jesus Christ, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

History of Starved Rock

IT is indeed fitting that in connection with the Golden Jubilee of our Utica Lutheran Church, the Church with the Open Door, that we give an historical account of our Starved Rock State Park, comprised of 1148 acres, which lies just across the river from our village, almost within a stone's throw of our church door, and the reason for a number of visitors to our Sunday School and Worship Services during the spring and summer months.

The following is reprinted with permission from "Starved Rock—History and Romance in the Heart of the West."

"As early as the Revolutionary War, Starved Rock was haunted ground. The bleaching bones of a brave Illinois tribe lay scattered and broken on the pinnacle that stands in the heart of the Illinois River Valley. Wandering tribes of other Indian Nations avoided the spot. It was the place of the dead.

"The legend of Starved Rock is the exciting story of Indian wars. Here, on the northern shore of the Illinois River, lived a small tribe of the now extinct 'Illinois' Indians. In the literature of French and English fur-traders, and by other Indians, they were known as 'The Illinois of the Rock'. They lived quietly, farming their gardens and hunting the deer, otter, muskrat and beaver. Once or twice a year they traded their furs with the French voyageurs who made regular trips up and down the Illinois River.

"For more than a hundred years there had been Indian wars in the Illinois Valley. In the seventeenth century the Illinois Indians fought the fierce Iroquois who came from New York; later, with the Fox, Sac, Pottawatomi, Kickapoo, and Ottawa Indians from the north and east. The wars were generally short, no more than two or three battles, but very dangerous because they almost always involved surprise attacks on peaceful, unsuspecting villages. Lone warriors who had crossed the river and hunted small game in the canyons were attacked and scalped before they even had a chance to give their war cry. Women hoeing in the corn-fields and unmindful of lurking danger, were hacked to death before they could learn the identity of the enemy and give warning. When the marauders were discovered, pandemonium reigned in the village. Some of the villagers ran to hiding places in the nearby woods or the canyons across the river. Others, the warriors, seized their tomahawks and went out to meet the enemy. War cries and death chants intermingled as the battle was fought, and blood flowed freely. It ended only when the attackers were routed or the attacked themselves were put to flight.

"Thus it was the year 1769 when the Illinois of the Rock were living on the plain across the river. An Ottawa Indian chief, Pontiac, tried to win the Illinois tribes that lived along the Mississippi River and in the Illinois Valley to an Indian confederation that would drive out the Europeans who had entered the Middle West. The Illinois, however, were friendly with the Frenchmen who lived among them, and refused to take part in Pontiac's conspiracy. In the early summer, 1769, following an argument with some Illinois tribesmen, he was brutally murdered.

"The Ottawa, Pontiac's tribe, were unable to avenge his death. One of his allied tribes, the Pottawatomi, did, however, set out on the war-path against the Illinois in the fall of the same year. The Pottawatomi did not know that the Illinois of the Rock were innocent of the murder when they fell upon the little village that was busily engaged in the yearly harvest. Utterly unable to defend themselves when the hostile forces swept down on them from the paths along the northern bluffs, the Illinois men, women and children waded across the low waters of the river and sought refuge on top of the rock.

"The Pottawatomi followed them and tried to scale the steep walls of the rock but were always repulsed. Unable to conquer the Illinois by storming the heights, the besiegers camped at the foot of the rock, determined to await a battle when the Illinois would be forced to come down.

"Before long the food supply of the Illinois gave out, and their water supply too, for the Pottawatomi were careful to cut ropes of water buckets that were lowered into the river from time to time. Three long weeks the Illinois stayed on the rock. Before the first week had passed, they had eaten their dogs; by the time of



HISTORIC STARVED ROCK
Utica, Illinois

the third week they were eating grass and bark. Hunger and thirst brought the realization that they must descend and chance a battle or die of starvation. They resolved to sneak through the Pottawatomi camp during some propitious night.

"On the first dark, stormy night the procession silently made its way down the steep eastern face of the rock. The first of the Illinois were already passing through the outposts of the sleeping Pottawatomi camp when the last were leaving the top of the rock. A mother slipped as she made her way down the cliff; her child began to cry; and the Pottawatomi were awakened. The slaughter that took place within the narrow confines of the canyon was terrific. The cries of the hunger-worn warriors, too weak to defend even themselves ably, were soon stifled and then stilled. Womanhood and childhood was no defense, for women and children alike shared the warriors' cruel fate. Even those who had returned to the top of the rock were not spared. When all were dead, the Pottawatomi returned to their land. Victorious, yes, but grimly appreciative of the horrors that took place in the blood-soaked canyon. It is said that even the victors regretted the day on which they had shed so much blood.

"Such is the tale told by the Indians to the first American settlers who chose to live near the rock."

In the valley at the foot of the northern bluff lies Utica. On the plain between Utica and the river are the Indian mounds that are the graves of the once rich Illinois. There among the mounds are the remains of the first Utica—crumbled foundations overgrown with grasses, indicative of a village that moved across the valley to meet transportation by canal and rail. Today, with the river's deep waterway, the dam and locks are at the base of Lovers' Leap. Transportation again moves through the Illinois River. On top of the bluff overlooking the valley stands the new Starved Rock Lodge. Rustic in appearance, it blends into the park landscape, a beautiful structure, indeed.



LAKES-TO-GULF WATERWAY DAM

Anniversary Program

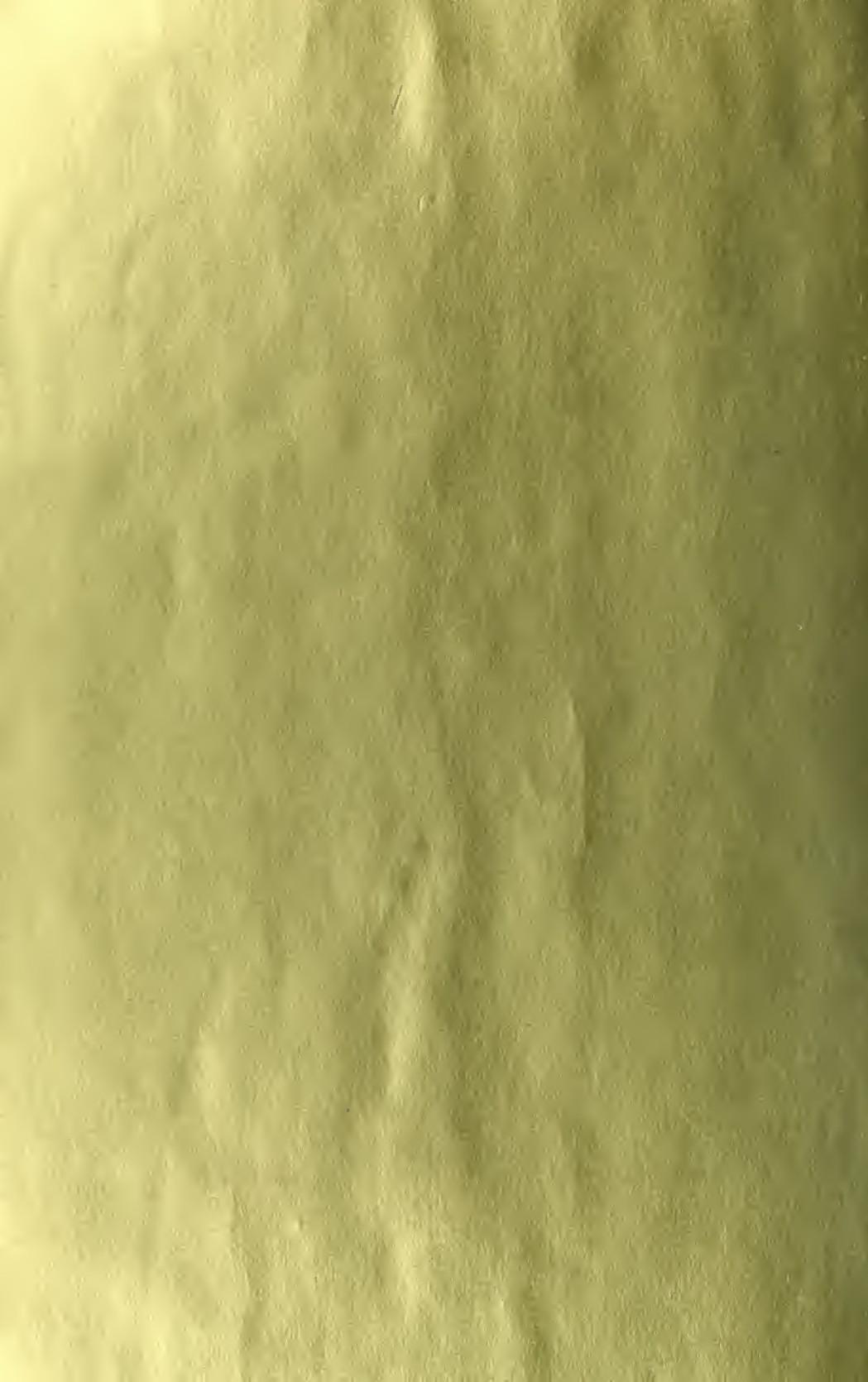
SATURDAY, JUNE 15TH—FELLOWSHIP DAY

- 4:00 P. M.—Reception of confirmands, members and guests.
7:00 P. M.—Reunion Banquet in Dining Room of Starved Rock Lodge. Mr. Paul Larson, Toastmaster.
Address by Reverend G. Everett Arden.

SUNDAY, JUNE 16—ANNIVERSARY DAY

- 9:45 A. M.—Sunday School.
11:00 A. M.—Divine Worship and Communion Service.
Organ Prelude.
Hymn 249, "O Jesus Christ, Thou Bread of Life."
Communion Sermon—Reverend G. Everett Arden.
The Confession of Sins. The Absolution.
Hymn No. 247, "With Deep Humility, O Lord."
Announcements.
Anthem—Ladies Choir—"O Lamb of God, I Come."
Offertory.
"O Lamb of God, Most Holy."
The Preface.
Vere Dignum.
The Words of Institution.
The Lord's Prayer.
Sanctus. Pax. Agnus Dei.
Communion Hymn No. 234, "The Death of Jesus
Christ Our Lord;" and No. 235, "Thine Own, O
Loving Saviour."
The Thanksgiving.
Benedicamus.
The Benediction.

3:00 P. M.—Golden Anniversary Service.
Organ Prelude.
Hymn No. 264, "The Church's One Foundation."
Scripture and Prayer—Rev. G. Everett Arden.
Anthem—"In the Temple Where Our Fathers."
Address by Dr. Conrad Bergendoff.
Anthem—"A Mighty Fortress is Our God."
History of Congregation by Mrs. Louis Larson.
Messages and Greetings.
Offertory.
Hymn No. 276—"My Church, My Church."
Benediction—Rev. G. Everett Arden.
Organ Postlude.



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